

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PERTH 00046 230540Z

17

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 AF-06 EUR-12 SAJ-01 NEA-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ERDA-07 ACDA-10 OMB-01

NRC-07 /120 W

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FM AMCONSUL PERTH

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 0906

UNCLAS PERTH 0046

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MNUC, PFOR, AS

SUBJ: BEAZLEY-COURT EXCHANGE OVER NPW USE OF COCKBURN SOUND

1. SUMMARY: PERTH MORNING DAILY, THE WEST AUSTRALIAN, REPORTED AT LENGTH ON FEBRUARY 21 STATEMENTS BY FEDERAL LABOR SHADOW DEFENSE MINISTER BEAZLEY ON THE RISKS OF COLLISIONS INVOLVING NPW'S AND CONSEQUENT 'FRIGHTENING' DANGERS OF RADIOACTIVE SPILL-AGES TO METROPOLITAN AREA IF NPW'S WERE ALLOWED TO USE COCKBURN SOUND. TODAY'S WEST AUSTRALIAN CARRIED LENGTHY REJOINDER BY WEST AUSTRALIAN PREMIER, SIR CHARLES COURT, ACCUSING BEAZLEY OF IRRESPONSIBLE SCARE TACTICS AND CITING, AMONG MANY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, THE PERFECT SAFETY RECORD OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR FLEET AND AUSTRALIA'S CRITICAL ROLE IN MAINTAINING STRATEGIC BALANCE.
2. THE REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO BEAZLEY ON FEBRUARY 21 CITED AN AVERAGE OF 20 COLLISIONS A YEAR INVOLVING U.S. NAVY AND RECALLED COLLISION INVOLVING THE AUSTRALIAN CARRIER MELBOURNE AND A U.S. DESTROYER. BEAZLEY QUOTED AS HAVING NO OBJECTION TO A NAVAL SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY AT COCKBURN SOUND BUT BEING OPPOSED TO ITS USE BY NUCLEAR POWERED OR ARMED SHIPS. BEAZLEY CALLED FOR LOCATION OF BASES FOR NPW'S AS FAR AS POSSIBLE

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 PERTH 00046 230540Z

FROM POPULATED AREAS AND CITED, IN ADDITION TO DANGERS OF

NPW ACCIDENTS, RISKS OF ATTACK ON BASES USED BY NUCLEAR-ARMED SHIPS.

3. COURT ACCUSED BEAZLEY OF EXPLOITING NUCLEAR FEAR AND ANTI-AMERICAN PREJUDICE AND SAID HE HOPED AUSTRALIA'S DEFENSE WOULD NEVER BE SUBJECT TO BEAZLEY'S WARPED THINKING. OTHER POINTS COVERED BY COURT STATEMENT INCLUDED: ABSENCE OF COLLISIONS IN THE FREMANTLE-COCKBURN PORT COMPLEX FOR OVER 20 YEARS, RESPECTIVE SOVIET-U.S. NAVAL SHIP DAYS IN INDIAN OCEAN, SOVIET NAVAL FACILITIES AT ADEN, AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC LOCATION AND IMPORTANCE TO WESTERN STRATEGIC BALANCE WITH CONSEQUENT NEED TO STAND BY ALLIANCE, AND SOVIET ADVANCES AFFECTING AFRICAN SIDE OF INDIAN OCEAN BASIN.
  4. TODAY'S WEST AUSTRALIAN ALSO CARRIED A BEAZLEY LETTER TO THE EDITOR IN REPLY TO A PREVIOUS LETTER ACCUSING HIM OF PACIFISM. BEAZLEY'S LETTER CITES DANGER OF DECISIVE SOVIET NUCLEAR FIRST STRIKE AND MAKES FOLLOWING POINTS:
    - A) NORTHWEST CAPE AND PINE GAP ARE FOR CONTROLLING MISSILES LAUNCHED AGAINST DONETZ BASIN FROM SUBMARINES IN ARABIAN SEA.
    - B) SOVIET INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN STEMS FROM INTEREST IN DESTROYING SUBMARINES TARGETED AGAINST DONETZ BASIN BEFORE THEY COULD LAUNCH MISSILES.
    - C) NAVAL BASE NEAR PERTH, ASSOCIATED WITH U.S. NUCLEAR SUBMARINE CAPABILITY IN INDIAN OCEAN, WOULD ALSO BE A SOVIET FIRST STRIKE TARGET, TAKING THE CITY OUT WITH IT.
    - D) U.S. POLICY IN ANGOLA WAS NOT FRAMED FOR CONVENIENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA NOR IS IT SO FRAMED FOR AUSTRALIA.
  5. IT SHOULD BE RECALLED THAT BEAZLEY IS LONGTIME LABOR HR MEMBER FOR FREMANTLE.
  6. COPIES OF ARTICLES BEING POUCHED.
- FOULON

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